

REMARKS

Claims 1 to 11, 13, 14 and 16 to 26 are pending this application, of which claims 1, 10 and 14 are the independent claims. Applicant acknowledges that the Examiner has allowed claims 10, 11, 13, 14 and 16 to 26. Favorable reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

Prior Art Rejection

The Examiner rejected claims 1, 2 and 6 as being obvious over Hoeg et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,371,909) in view of Thompson (U.S. Patent No. 6,007,484). We submit that neither Hoeg nor Thompson, taken separately or in combination, discloses or suggests an endoscope that includes an imaging probe that "is detachably secured to the pivot mechanism" as recited in amended claim 1. Rather, Hoeg describes a camera 130 that is permanently "mounted" in the endoscope 12 (see column 9, line 59 and FIG. 15).

Thompson describes an endoscope that includes a camera with lights connected to a pivot mechanism. However, like Hoeg, Thompson describes a camera that is permanently attached to the pivot mechanism.

Even if Hoeg and Thompson were combined, none of the features of the resulting hypothetical combination discloses or suggests an imaging probe that is detachably secured to a pivot mechanism.

Indeed, nowhere in the references cited by the Examiner is there a single reference describing an imaging probe that is detachably secured to a pivot mechanism. For at least the foregoing reasons, Applicant requests withdrawal of the art rejection.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, the entire application is believed to be in condition for allowance and such action is respectfully requested at the Examiner's earliest convenience.

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Page : 8 of 8

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in accordance with the change of address request submitted on January 23, 2003. Applicant requests that the address change be made as previously requested.

No fees are believed to be due for this Response; however, if any fees are due, please apply such fees to Deposit Account No. 06-1050 referencing Attorney Docket 00167-428001.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: March 10, 2004

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